(c) if so, the details and findings of the exercise; and

(d) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A pilot study was conducted by CDSCO (West Zone), Mumbai by drawing the survey samples to assess the genunity and quality of drugs during 2002 to 2006. In this study 3246 samples of fast moving brand like Combiflame tab, Althrocin, Alrax, Becosules caps, Coldact, Corex Cough syrups, Cifran, Crocin, Norfox, Nise, Novamox, Septran, Vovern tab etc. were drawn from different places in West Zone for monitoring of quality of Drugs Moving in West Zone. Out of which 2 number of samples were found not to be standard quality and 5 number of samples were found to be spurious/counterfeit. Prosecutions have been launched in the case of spurious/counterfeit drugs by the State Food & Drug Authority.

Spurious medicines control measures

515. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the total volume of counterfeit and contraband products have increased by 50 per cent this year at Rs. 30,000/- crores, accruing losses worth Rs. 15,000/- crores, to Government by way of tax evasion according to ASSOCHAM;

(b) whether it is also a fact that while the total spurious market in the country is at Rs. 20,000/- crores, share of fake drugs market was reportedly at about Rs. 3,000/- crores; and

(c) if so, what corrective measures Government proposes to take or have taken on the menace of fake medicines along with the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) ASSOCHAM has published certain facts and figures indicating the quantum of counterfeit, spurious and contraband goods including pharmaceuticals. However, authenticity of the same cannot be confirmed.

Information furnished by the State Drugs Control Organizations in respect of testing of samples of drugs in the country reveal that 7 to 8 percent of samples were reported to be not of standard quality and out of this 0.2 to 0.3 percent were found to be spurious. The Ministry have information of terms of number of samples tested and this cannot be translated in terms of monetary value as prices of drugs vary from product to product.

(c) The Government is aware of the problem and had constituted expert committees from time to time to find ways and means to combat the menace of spurious drugs. The matter was also deliberated by an Expert Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. R.A. Mashelkar, Director General and Secretary, CSIR which was set up in 2003 for a comprehensive review of the drug regulatory system in the country including the extent of problem of spurious drugs and remedial measures to deal with this problem effectively. The major amendments proposed relate to enhancement of penalties prescribed under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, provision of special courts for speedy trial of drug related offences, compounding of offences, authorizing the police also to file prosecution for drug related offences and making all drug related offences cognizable and non-bailable. All this is expected to act as a strong deterrent for manufacturers of counterfeit drugs. This Ministry has already initiated the process of amending the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 to provide for stricter penalities, in pursuance of the recommendations of the Mashelkar Committee. Government of India has also launched a 5-year World Bank aided Capacity Building Project for Food Safety and Quality Control of drugs with a total project cost of Rs. 354.25 crores. Extensive assistance is being provided to State Governments to augment their drug testing facility by way of equipments, manpower, training and civil works under the Project and a strong IEC campaign for the education of the consumers have also been initiated.

Target for polio eradication

†516. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the target had been fixed to make altogether polio free India by 2007;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.